

House Republican Press Release

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Bill Addressing Veterans' Exposure to Hazardous Material Passes House



HARTFORD - State Representative Bill Aman (R-South Windsor) co-sponsored and voted in favor of a measure that entitles service members returning, or who returned, from active service in the Persian Gulf War or in a designated combat zone during Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom have the right, on

and after October 1, 2006, to a best-practice health screening test for uranium poisoning and exposure to any hazardous material.

The legislation requires the adjutant general of the National Guard to submit a report to the Veterans' Committee on the scope and adequacy of the training service members receive to detect whether their service is likely to involve, or to have involved, exposure to depleted uranium or other hazardous material by October 1, 2005. The report must include an assessment of the feasibility and cost of adding predeployment training on potential exposure to depleted uranium and other toxic chemical substances, and the precautions recommended under combat and noncombat conditions in a combat zone.

The bill originally limited the scope to depleted uranium. Representative Aman supported an amendment that expanded the scope to include all hazardous material.

“As a Vietnam veteran, I do not want to see a twenty-year debate over exposure issues for our men and women in the armed forces who have returned from these recent conflicts, such as the one that ensued over Agent Orange during the Vietnam era,” said **Representative Aman**. “Our soldiers who put their lives on the line every day in the field of combat deserve adequate screening upon their return from the field of battle, for possible treatment for any hazardous substances they may have unknowingly been exposed to.”

The bill now heads to the state Senate for action there.